IN THE CLAIMS:

Please AMEND claims 1, 13, 19, and 20 as follows.

Please CANCEL claims 2, 3, 12, and 14-18 without prejudice.

Please ADD claims 21-40 as follows.

1.   (Currently Amended) A communications system comprising:

a first communications node (GGSN);

a second communications node (SGSN);

a plurality of charging nodes (CGF); and

a memory;

said first node comprising means for sending charging information to at least one of said charging nodes,

said second node comprises means for sending charging information to at least one of said charging nodes,

said memory comprising means for storing information identifying at least one of said charging nodes as being a default charging node for a communication session; wherein

said first node and said second node are arranged to send respective charging information for said session to the same said default at least one charging node in dependenceusing on said information stored in said memory, if said default charging node is available.

2-3.   (Cancelled)

4.   (Original)   A communications system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said communications system is a UMTS architecture communications system.

5.   (Original)   A communications system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said communications system is a GPRS architecture communications system.

6.   (Original)   A communications system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first communications node is a gateway GPRS service node (GGSN).

7.   (Original)   A communications system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said second communications node is a serving GPRS support node (SGSN).

8.   (Original)   A communications system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said at least one charging node comprises a charging gateway function (CGF).

9.   (Original)   A communications system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said at least one charging node is a charging gateway (CG).

10.   (Original)   A communications system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said memory is located within said first or said second communications node.

11.   (Original) A communications system as claimed in claim 10, further comprising a second memory located within the other of said first or second communications node, wherein said second memory is arranged to store information identifying at least one of said charging nodes and said second memory is arranged so that the value stored in said memory is synchronised with the value stored in said second memory.

12.   (Cancelled)

13.   (Currently Amended)   A method for billing in a communications system comprising the steps of:

sending information from a first communications node to at least one of a plurality of charging nodes,

sending information to a second communications node to at least one of a plurality of charging nodes,

storing, in a memory, information identifying at least one of said a plurality of charging nodes associated with a communication session as a default charging node for said session; whereinand

sending charging information for said session from a first communications node (GGSN) to said default charging node if available.

~~said first communications node and said second communications node are~~ ~~arranged to send respective information to the same at least one said charging node~~ ~~dependent on said information stored in said memory.~~

14-18. (Cancelled)

19.   (Currently Amended)   A <u>gateway</u> communication node for use in a communication system, ~~said node being arranged to send information to a charging node,~~ said node comprising a memory for storing information identifying ~~the~~<u>a default</u> charging node <u>(CG1) associated with a communication session (GPRS)</u> to which said node is to send said <u>charging</u> information<u> for said session, and said node being arranged to send</u> <u>charging information for said session to said default charging node if said default</u> <u>charging node is available</u>.

20.   (Currently Amended)   A node as claimed in claim ~~20~~<u>19</u>, wherein said node is arranged to send said information <u>identifying said default charging node</u> in said memory to a second node.

21.   (New) A method as claimed in claim 13 comprising the step of:

sending charging information from a second communications node to said default node.

22. (New) A method as claimed in claim 13, further comprising the step of storing in a second memory said information identifying said default charging node.

23. (New) A method as claimed in claim 22, further comprising the step of maintaining said memory and said second memory so that the information identifying the default charging node is the same.

24. (New) A method as claimed in claim 13, comprising the step of sending said information identifying said default charging node in said memory to a second node.

25. (New) A method as claimed in claim 13, comprising generating charging information for a packet data connection (PDP) and selecting said default charging node in dependence on the communication session with which the packet data connection (PDP) is associated.

26. (New) A method as claimed in claim 13, comprising storing information identifying said default charging node in said memory in response to creating a first packet data connection (PDP) for said communication session.

27. (New) A method as claimed in claim 13, comprising the step of sending charging information to a secondary charging node (CG2) if said default charging node (CG1) is not reachable.

28. (New) A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said storing step comprises selecting a charging node being currently determined as an active charging node and storing in said memory said active charging node as said default charging node to be associated with the communication session.

29. (New) A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said session (GPRS) comprises a plurality of packet data connections (PDP).

30. (New) A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said charging information comprises a charging data record.

31. (New) A node as claimed in claim 19, wherein said node is a GGSN.

32. (New) A node as claimed in claim 19, said node being arranged to generate charging information for a packet data connection (PDP), and to select said default charging node in dependence on the communication session (GPRS) with which said packet data connection (PDP) is associated,

33. (New) A node as claimed in claim 19, wherein said information identifying said default charging node is stored in said memory (CG1) in response to creating a first packet data connection (PDP) for said communication session.

34.   (New) A node as claimed in claim 19, comprising means for sending generated charging information of said session to said default charging node (CG1).

35.   (New) A node as claimed in claim 19, comprising sending means for sending generated charging information to a secondary charging node (CG2) if said default charging node (CG1) is not reachable.

36.   (New) A node as claimed in claim 35, wherein said secondary charging node (CG2) is a currently active charging node for said node (GGSN).

37.   (New) A node as claimed in claim 19, comprising means for selecting a charging node being currently determined as an active charging node for said node (GGSN) and storing in said memory said active charging node as said default charging node to be associated with said communication session.

38.   (New) A node as claimed in claim 19, comprising means for instructing a second node (SGSN) said assigned default charging node (CG1) for said session.

39.   (New) A node as claimed in claim 19, wherein said session (GPRS) comprises a plurality of packet data connections (PDP).

40. (New) A node as claimed in claim 19, wherein said charging information comprises a charging data record.